

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-09

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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R 080333Z DEC 76

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2979

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

FBIS OKINAWA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 14215

NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT PINR CH

SUBJECT: TIEN AN MEN INCIDENT KEY TO THE REHABILITATION OF TENG
HSIAO-PING

REF: PEKING 2524

SUMMARY: FEI I-MIN TOLD CONGEN OFFICERS THAT TENG HSIAO-PING IS TO BE REHABILITATED BUT LEFT OPEN THE QUESTION OF THE SPECIFIC POSITION WHICH HE WOULD HOLD. FEI'S REEXAMINATION OF THE TIEN AN MEN INCIDENT WHICH RESULTED IN TENG'S DISMISSAL STRESSED THAT POLITBURO LEADERS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH THE CHARGES AND THAT CHAIRMAN MAO SPECIFICALLY USE THE ELEVATION OF HUA KUO-FENG AS FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY AS A MEANS OF BLOCKING THE "GANG OF FOUR" FROM STEPPING INTO THE KEY POSTS BEHIND HIM. END SUMMARY

1. TAKING THE REHABILITATION OF TENG HSIAO-PING FOR GRANTED
AND NOT UNEXPECTEDLY BLAMING THE APRIL TIEN AN MEN INCIDENT
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WHICH CAUSED HIS DISMISSAL ON THE "GANG OF FOUR," TA KUNG PAO

PUBLISHER FEI I-MIN TOLD CONGEN OFFICERS (DECEMBER 7) THAT THE POLITBURO'S DISMISSAL OF TENG WAS COMPLETED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF SUSPICION ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF THE INCIDENT (HK 3992). FOR THIS REASON, FEI EXPLAINED, THE POLITBURO REFUSED TO DROP TENG FROM THE PARTY AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, CHAIRMAN MAO SPECIFICALLY ALTERED THE POLITBURO PROPOSAL TO NAME HUA KUO-FENG AS PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN AND PREMIER BY PERSONALLY WRITING IN "FIRST" BEFORE PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN (HK 3978). ACCORDING TO FEI, THIS CLEARLY INDICATED MAO'S DISTRUST OF THE "GANG OF FOUR" WHO WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE HAD VICE CHAIRMAN WANG HUNG-WEN NEXT IN LINE TO SUCCEED CHAIRMAN MAO.

2. FEI OPINED THAT THIS LEFT THE "GANG OF FOUR" WITH NO OTHER OPTION BUT TO TRY FOR A COUP AGAINST HUA AND THE OTHER CENTER LEADERS. THIS THEY ATTEMPTED TO DO FIRST BY MANIPULATING THE ANTI-TENG CAMPAIGN--SPECIFICALLY CALLING HIS CRIMES "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY", A CHARGE MORE SERIOUS THAN THAT APPROVED BY MAO, AND THEN PRESUMABLY BY ATTACKING OTHER CENTER AND PROVINCIAL LEADERS AS HIS SUPPORTERS. THEIR LAST ATTEMPT WAS MADE IN FORGING MAO'S FINAL ADJURATION "ACT ACCORDING TO PRINCIPLES LAID DOWN" AND TRYING THROUGH THIS TO SEIZE POWER.

3. ALTHOUGH IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE FROM FEI THE POLITBURO MEMBERS WHO PROPOSED THE REMOVAL OF TENG, FEI DID ALLOW THAT THE APPEARANCE, AFTER LONG ABSENCE, OF LI HSIEN-NIEN ON THE MORNING TENG'S DISMISSAL WAS ANNOUNCED WAS VERY SIGNIFICANT. FEI ALSO REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT ON THE MODALITIES OF TENG'S REHABILITATION, BUT HE ASSERTED THAT IT WAS MERELY A MATTER OF TIME STATING TENG WAS NOW "FREE" AND STILL A PARTY MEMBER (HK14025). HE SPOKE OF RESTORATION IN GENERAL TERMS SUGGESTING TENG AS A "SPECIAL ADVISOR." HE COMMENTED THAT HUA COULD NOT BE BOTH CHAIRMAN AND PREMIER FOR LONG AND SUGGESTED AS POSSIBLE "PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN", WITH LI HANDLING THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND FINANCE ASPECTS, AND YEH CHIEN-YING THE MILITARY RESPONSIBILITIES. CLEARLY REFLECTING RECENT PROPAGANDA GUIDANCE, FEI ASSERTED THAT TENG'S CRIME WAS IN ACTING TOO "ANXIOUSLY" AND IN PUTTING FORTH A NUMBER OF POLICIES WHICH DID NOT MENTION THE IMPORTANCE OF "CLASS STRUGGLE."

4. FEI STATED THAT IN RETROSPECT SOME EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE
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PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE TIEN AN MEN GATHERINGS ON THE FINAL DAY WERE INNOCENT BYSTANDERS WHO HAD COME TO CONTINUE TO PAY TRIBUTE TO PREMIER CHOU. THEY WERE JOINED BY A GROUP WHICH CONSISTED HALF OF PEKING AND TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY "PROFESSIONAL STUDENT" PROVOCATEURS AND ABOUT HALF PEKING MILITIAMEN WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLENT ACTIVITIES WHICH TOOK PLACE. HINTING AT CHARGES WHICH COULD DEVELOP IN THE CURRENT INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT (REFTEL), FEI STATED THAT THERE ARE RUMORS

THAT MO HSIAO-LIU A DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE PEKING MILITIA COMMAND WAS THE ACTUAL DIRECTOR OF THE STREET ACTION AND THAT CHIANG CHING WAS IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT. FEI ALSO STATED THAT THIS GROUP WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR "MANY DEATHS" AND FOR ARRESTS AND LONG-TERM DETENTIONS. FEI FURTHER REMARKED THAT IT WAS THE "GANG OF FOUR" WHO ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS THAT THERE WAS TO BE NO PROVINCIAL MOURNING FOR PREMIER CHOU AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH AND THAT WHITE FLOWERS AND BLACK ARMBANDS WERE TO BE PROHIBITED AMONG THE MASSES, THUS IN A WAY MAKING THE COMMEMORATION OF CHOU'S DEATH ON THE DAY FOR COMMEMORATING MARTYRS A NATURAL OCCURRENCE.
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